

P-16 COUNCIL REPORT

The March meeting of the P-16 Council began with a visit to Elkhorn Middle School, Frankfort, Kentucky, where University of Kentucky professor Jane Lindle serves as interim principal during a cooperative agreement between UK and the Franklin County public schools. Dr. Lindle described recent research on brain development of middle school children and its implications for class size, instructional practices, and the education of middle school teachers and administrators. Council members also learned of obstacles to active participation of postsecondary educators in the P-12 system, including inflexible retirement and health plans, university faculty evaluation policies, and P-12 certification regulations.

The P-16 Council endorsed the literacy and mathematics alignment teams' recommendations. The recommendations define what students need to know and be able to do in high school to be prepared for college. (See agenda item C-7.)

The P-16 Council also considered the relationship between high school graduation requirements and minimum postsecondary admissions requirements. The P-16 Council reviewed research suggesting a strengthened high school curriculum for all students—because all will need some postsecondary education in order to flourish. They reviewed the effect of a more rigorous curriculum for all students on high school graduation rates and on teachers. The P-16 Council will continue these discussions over its next few meetings. Members asked that Kati Haycock, executive director of the Education Trust, be invited to present national data on the effect of a rigorous high school curriculum on all students' achievement levels and the economic implications of tracking only some students into a pre-college curriculum. The Education Trust, located in Washington, DC, is one of the best known national organizations promoting P-16 issues.

The Department of Education identified funding issues that discouraged collaboration between high schools and colleges. Efforts by schools and postsecondary institutions to create new learning opportunities for high school students (including dual enrollment options) will require flexibility in funding formulas to reward cooperation rather than penalize it. Dual enrollment in high school and postsecondary courses is discouraged because high schools sometimes lose funding when students take courses for college credit.

Jon Akers, executive director of the Center for School Safety located at Eastern Kentucky University, and Sherron Jackson, a member of the center's board, presented information on the work of the center. The center promotes policies at the state level that combat violence in schools. The council supported inclusion of the issue of school safety in the teacher education curriculum.

The P-16 Council previously endorsed funding local P-16 councils. In March, the Council on Postsecondary Education approved allocating \$100,000 for the formation of local P-16 councils. Requests for proposals were mailed throughout the state. The council staff is assisting in the planning of local P-16 councils.